**Minutes of Chester and Wrexham Amnesty Meeting 16/9/2013**

1. **Present:** Laura, John, Richard, Louise, Hai Ying, Abi (from Chester Aid to The Homeless), Max, Alex, Val, Heather

**Apologies:** Wendy, Alan, Peter, Daoud

1. **Chile Film Festival at Theatre Clwyd 17-25 September**
* Theatre Clwyd are holding this event to commemorate 40 years since Pinochet’s coup. There will be an Amnesty exhibition (organised by us and Colwyn Bay group) and Louise and Patsy will represent the group at the launch event on 17th September.
1. **One World Week – 20-27 October 2013 – Richard**
* The theme this year is ‘Food and Food Security’ to tie in with the IF campaign.
* Richard has organised a stall at the hospital to jointly promote Amnesty and the British Institute of Human Rights (BIHR). Thursday 24/10 is Human Rights Day and this year is the 60th Anniversary of the BIHR.
* Richard also told us about the Unity Centre in Cuppin Street, Chester, that has an exhibition on “Chester Visitors”.
1. **Money Matters – Alex**
* The bag pack on 1/9 raised £230, we now have £1051 in the bank(!).
* Alex proposed that we send £600 of this to AI and keep £400. The group voted and agreed this by a large majority.
1. **North West Regional Conference – Manchester 16/11/2013**
* Members were encouraged to attend and as the venue is large, there should be no barriers to attending. Laura will circulate details again and members to register interest with Laura in the next couple of weeks.
1. **AIUK Matters**
* John reported that the chair of the Board of Trustees of AIUK has resigned after some ill-advised tweets. Regret was expressed about this as he has held this role for a long time and through a turbulent period for AIUK, and it was felt that this was a sad end to an impressive voluntary role.
1. **Zimbabwe/Workshop follow up**
* There was a positive response to the workshop held in July and enthusiasm to hold more workshops, perhaps two a year.
* Members were more enthusiastic about the idea of issues/topics-based sessions than those on fundraising/campaigning although this may be more relevant/desirable in future (Alex noted that some groups have a minimum financial commitment to AI each year eg. £250).
* Laura to enquire about the death penalty workshop
* Richard reported that the World Development Forum would be interested in holding a joint workshop – perhaps on poverty and human rights.
1. **Write for Rights (WfR) Campaign**
* It was proposed and agreed to try to repeat last year’s successful event held at the Customs House. Date agreed as the usual November meeting – 18/11/2013. Laura to ask Wendy to enquire about using the Customs House function room again.
* Laura to contact university group
* Abi from CATH explained that she had come along as she is interested in setting up a weekly letter-writing group with clients there. Those present discussed the different forms of letter-writing that AI does and the specific purpose of the Write for Rights event. There was enthusiasm about the idea of the CATH group launching in time for a WfR event on 18/11 during the day, to tie in with the group event during the evening.
* Hai Ying to enquire about holding similar events in Wrexham with the Choir and the drop-in at the Methodist Church
* Laura/John to check with Alan about suggested number of materials required.
1. **North Africa**
* no updates
1. **Death Penalty**
* We did not take any actions without Alan present, but members had some updates from the media/AI. It was noted that:
* A British woman was executed in Texas (as she was from the Caribbean, there was reluctance on the part of the British government to get involved)
* The ban on EU export of lethal injection drugs is causing complications/stalemate for death row prisoners in USA. In Georgia, it has been suggested that gas chambers be reintroduced
* In India, the men found guilty of gang rape will be put to death
* Lindsey Sandford in Indonesia has a date with the Supreme Court to appeal her death sentence for drug trafficking
1. **AOB**
* The group discussed Syria and Amnesty’s response
* The World Development Forum has a conference meeting on 16/11/13 at Chester University (Best Building – Geography) on “Food Matters” – part of the IF campaign with talks and workshops by Oxfam, CAFOD, Christian Aid, Actionaid. It costs £10 to attend and lunch is provided. Richard will provide leaflets.
1. **Future meetings**
* 21st October – Wrexham – Hai Ying and Louise to confirm venue by 7/10
* 18th November – Write for Rights at (hopefully) Customs House
* 9th December – proposed social at Hai Ying’s house – tbc
* Alex to liase with Frank at The Watergate Inn.